

Barth Society met in San Diego November 21-22, 2014

Our meeting in **San Diego** in conjunction with the AAR featured a Friday afternoon session from 4:00 P.M. to 6:30 P.M. and a Saturday morning session that was held in conjunction with the **Eberhard Jüngel Colloquium** from 9:00 A.M. to 11:30 A.M. The presenters for the **Friday afternoon** session were Faye Bodley-Dangelo, **Harvard Divinity School**, whose lecture was entitled: “*Animating Eve: The Confessing Subject and the Human ‘Other’ in Barth’s Reading of Genesis 2*” and Willie J. Jennings, **Duke University**, whose lecture was entitled: “*Theology after 1945: Karl Barth and the Dilemmas of a Strange New World.*” George Hunsinger, **Princeton Theological Seminary**, President of the **KBSNA**, presided. The Theme on **Saturday morning** was: Eberhard Jüngel at 80. The speakers were: 1) Philip G. Ziegler, **University of Aberdeen**, whose lecture was entitled: “*Theology Domiciled in Christian Freedom—Some Remarks*”; 2) George Hunsinger, **Princeton Theological Seminary**, “*A Reformed Theology of Justification*”; and 3) Paul R. Hinlicky, **Roanoke College**, “*Jüngel on the Theological Metaphor.*” R. David Nelson, **Grand Rapids, MI**, presided.

The Tenth Annual Barth Conference will be held at Princeton Theological Seminary **June 21-24, 2015**. This Conference is entitled: “*Karl Barth & The Gospels: Interpreting Gospel Texts*” and is co-sponsored by *The Center for Barth Studies* at **Princeton Theological Seminary** and the *Karl Barth Society of North America*.

For full Details and Registration, the Conference website is: <http://www.ptsem.edu/barthconference/>

What follows are summaries and a brief recap of the lectures from the meeting in **San Diego**.

Animating Eve: The Confessing Subject and the Human ‘Other’ in Barth’s Reading of Genesis 2

Faye Bodley-Dangelo
Harvard Divinity School

At the center of Karl Barth’s theological anthropology is a construal of sexual difference that has both heteronormative and patriarchal force. In *Church Dogmatics* III Barth privileges a binary, hierarchical, marital male-female relationship as the norm for conceptualizing

sexual difference. For Barth, sexual difference is the primary structural difference that persists through all other modes of human difference (race, class, nation, age, etc.). Marriage between a man and woman is the central site in which this difference is to be performed and in which it has its theological significance; furthermore, a properly ordered marital relationship is one in which the male has a position of agential precedence: he leads, initiates, inspires and acts on behalf of a female follower who is to content herself with responding to his activity and direction. This is a relationship that Barth at the same time insists is a reciprocal

intersubjective gift-exchange based on mutual need, and performed in mutual self-disclosure and assistance, gifted to and received from the other. He intends this description of male-female relations to function as a normative model for all modes of interaction between the sexes and to be most fully realized in marriage. The problematic implications of this account become most obvious in his ethical discussion in III/4 where he uses it to stifle feminist critique and political action and to restrict the ways in which women respond to abusive domestic relationships.

Many feminist and queer theologies suspect Barth's entire theological edifice embeds intransigent power structures that make its patriarchy and heteronormativity an unavoidable outcome. In this lecture Bodley-Dangelo argued, along with other critical reconstructive readings of Barth's account (offered by Eugene Rogers, Graham Ward, and Elouise Renich Fraser), that Barth's theology provides substantial resources for an internal critique and reconfiguration of his account of sexual differences. She noted that even these friendlier critics, however, find his use of the creation story of Genesis 2 to be especially problematic to such efforts, because a heteronormative and hierarchical construal of sexual difference features centrally in Barth's retelling of the biblical narrative. Barth's figurative exegesis of the creation of Eve in *Church Dogmatics* III/1 functions as the biblical template for his normative account of the male-female relationship appearing in III/2 and III/4. Reconstructive efforts have offered internal resources for dismissing the central role that Barth's reading of Genesis 2 plays in favor of other biblical narratives.

In this lecture Bodley-Dangelo argued that Barth's reading of Genesis 2 provides its own resources for critiquing and reconstructing some of the most problematic gender-moves Barth makes in his exegesis. Following Barth's retelling of Adam's creation through his lengthy exegesis of Genesis 2, she showed how Barth presented Adam as a biblical model of

human agency, in his grateful and responsive relationship to multiple creaturely actors: Adam recognizes in the activity of other creatures a divine gift and a sign of the sort of activity he is to perform on behalf of the creaturely world. As a prefiguration of Christ, Adam is an iteration of the sort of human agent that appears throughout *Church Dogmatics* for all to imitate, regardless of sex. However, when Barth attempts to delineate an order between the sexes, this model of human agency becomes paradigmatically masculine: by prescribing an ambiguous agential precedence and initiative to the male, Barth leaves to the female a highly truncated model of agency that lacks features so central to Barth's account of human agency and responsibility—namely, the persistent activity of a seeking, choosing, confessing witness to divine grace in the gift of the creaturely other. Turning to other places in which Barth discusses female biblical figures, Bodley-Dangelo showed that Barth did in fact imagine and expect women to do all those things Adam does in Genesis 2. In view of such figures, it was argued that his configuration of Eve as the silent and immobile object of Adam's recognition and confession is a strategy used strictly for the purpose of subordinating female activity to male activity, and as such it is a move that his fully developed account of human agency actually resists.

Bodley-Dangelo's lecture followed Barth through three scenes in his reading of the Genesis 2 narrative: from Adam's creation, to his placement in the garden, to his search for and recognition of a companion worker in Eve. She focused specifically on the ways in which Adam functions as a prefiguration of Christ, as he performs for Barth the responsive and confessional witness proper to human freedom rightly ordered in relation to divine grace. She further argued that Barth's strategic manipulation of Eve's silence in the narrative is especially striking, not only in comparison to Adam's activity (as one who seeks, elects, and confesses his embrace of that which God has gifted to him), but also in comparison to the other non-human actors that populate Barth's

redescription of the narrative: mist, river, plant life, and even the barren earth, all serve at various points as signs of God's grace to Adam, and they do so precisely in their activity of service, wherein they function as a reflection of what God intends Adam's own activity to be. In such a network of co-actors and co-signs it is therefore striking that activity, speech, and choice should be dispensable for the role that Eve must serve as Adam's co-worker. The male who is to escape his isolation by seeking, choosing and greeting a companion more like him than any of these other actors must now recognize himself and learn something of what it is to be human in the face of a static and silent mirror.

After describing the ways in which Barth uses narrative silence to subordinate Eve to Adam, Bodely-Dangelo proceeded to point to other texts that show Barth does indeed imagine that women should do all that Adam does. In the Song of Songs he points to the seeking, desiring, choosing voice of the bride. In an earlier work, *The Great Promise*, he provides a detailed account of a reciprocal exchange between Mary and Elizabeth, in which two women do all that the Adam does in Genesis 2, each recognizing and giving vocal witness to the gift of God in the other. It was suggested that this scene of reciprocal exchange between two women, when placed side by side with the scene of Adam's recognition of Eve, gives us a picture of what inter-human exchange can look like in Barth's agential framework, when he is not concerned with securing the prerogative of one of the partners.

By foregrounding Barth's understanding of human agency itself, as it is performed by Adam in the Genesis 2 narrative, and by connecting this model of agency with the exchange between Elizabeth and Mary, the aim in Bodley-Dangelo's lecture was to show that his construal of human agency resists his patriarchal organization of the sexes and unsettles its heteronormative constraints. Barth has only one model of human agency, and if all are to perform it, they do so in exchanges

where there can be no talk of first and second actors, for his model prescribes the continual activity of witness to divine grace (a seeking, choosing, confessing) for all who would imitate it. Furthermore, Bodely-Dangelo suggested that because Barth carefully untethers his account of sexual difference from any determinate connection to reproductive functions, physiological features, or social mores, his privileging of sexual difference as *the* fundamental site of inter-human alterity is a claim that rests upon unquestioned assumptions about the indisputable givenness of sexual difference itself. His understanding of human agency opens this construal of the sexually differentiated self to multiple ways of performing, resisting and subverting precisely such cultural norms and dogmatic assumptions.

Theology After 1945: Karl Barth and the Dilemmas of a Strange New World

Willie J. Jennings
Duke University

In his lecture Willie Jennings suggested that an unprecedented situation emerged from Christian theology after 1945. Theology entered a strange new world and very few theologians showed us the dilemmas of that world like Karl Barth. Barth's theology is both paradigm and bellwether for post 1945 Christian thought that signals for us work yet undone. Barth entered a world emerging after 1945 that was beginning to make tremendous use of theology. This new moment after 1945 did not present increased secularism and a retreat for theology but its full exploitation and expansion. Three developments constitute the new situation and surround Christian thought including the thought of Barth. They are the emergence of the nation-state of Israel, the narrative power of the cold war, and the American difference. These three developments enfolded theology within a performativity that sought and yet seeks to instruct and limit

theology's reach and vision by inscribing the work of a Christian intellectual in a tight set of political, economic, and social options.

Theology Domiciled in Christian Freedom—Some Remarks

Philip G. Ziegler
University of Aberdeen

After some brief introductory remarks, Philip Ziegler noted that the theme of *freedom* features prominently in the work of Eberhard Jüngel. Jüngel characterized his own work as a theology of freedom, indeed a theology of liberation. For Jüngel, Jesus Christ himself is the truth of God that liberates and faith itself comes from the disclosure of God's love in him. That love "seeks us out, seizes and holds us in its free and sovereign mercy." God's coming to humanity in Christ brings freedom from sin and it is the theologian's responsibility to speak of this God in a responsible way as the one who enables a life of freedom which itself is animated by the coming "reign of freedom." The very first concern of Protestant theology then is to think evangelically by explicating the freedom for which Christ has freed us.

Ziegler then proceeded to reflect on the nature of Christian freedom as it originates in God himself by reflecting on Gal. 5:1. Paul took over a concept of freedom from the Greco-Roman world and made it central "to his testimony to the Gospel of Israel's God." In so doing Paul's view of freedom was formulated in contrast to sin and by reference to Christ and his saving work. This freedom is always characterized as a freedom from sin and a freedom for Christ—our freedom in Christ must be seen as the truth of the gospel which must be "defended and preserved" (Gal. 2:4-5). To reflect upon this freedom means to reflect upon the very salvation which constitutes Christian existence. This is the crux of Paul's statement that "For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand fast, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Gal. 5:1). The origin

and goal of Christ's saving work, which is itself a work of God's free grace, then is freedom.

First, this implies that the Christian life originates in God's freedom to determine himself in election. For Jüngel, following Luther, theology must find its truth in the crucified Christ. No one and nothing other than God could determine himself. But for Jüngel, God determined not to exist without humanity. Still, since this was an act of free grace, it could never imply that humanity is necessary to God in any sense. Following Bonhoeffer, Ziegler emphasized the continuing importance of God not just as the one who created the world from nothing but as the one who freely continues to relate with his creatures. While God is present in the world in his Word, he is and remains transcendent to it. Ziegler stressed the importance of understanding that God's actions as savior are free actions of God's love; any undermining of God's freedom would undermine the meaning of grace. Jüngel "creatively" fought for this by arguing that the God of the Gospel is "more than necessary" for us because God's love "bursts apart the relationship of necessity by surpassing it." It is the God who loves in freedom who justifies us in his grace.

Second, returning to Paul's position in Galatians, Ziegler again stressed that Christ liberates us from the slavery of sin as well as from death and the curse of the law. By making Christians his "possession" Christ frees people from enslaving powers for union with himself, the liberator. Salvation is envisaged as a "deliverance and recreation of the 'Israel of God'" (Gal. 6:16). Paul's "apocalyptic theology of the cross" clearly stresses that the freedom he has in mind is not to be found within the world as it presently exists. Salvation is thus an "eschatological event" coming from beyond the world. It is thus a "spiritual" reality.

Third, freedom is the "point and purpose" of a liberated life which "arises from the miracle of salvation." In servitude to Christ, Christians live their new life of freedom from sin; a freedom created and maintained in Christ by the Spirit. Freedom cannot simply be equated with "openness to the future" or identified with

worldly forms of freedom. Rather, in this context, it refers to “the earthly reality of Christ’s lordship.” Hence, the freedom of disciples “to attest and act on the basis of Christ’s reign amidst the roil of earthly powers” is due to God’s freedom at work in his witnesses. Christian freedom therefore must be seen as a continuing victorious act of the Spirit in the lives of believers “leading them into the truth of their salvation and forging a new community of mutual service and liberated agency.” This act of the Spirit is not a “reward on condition of service, or a ‘resource’ for struggling believers,” but is the enabling factor where this freedom occurs. Spiritual freedom then refers indirectly to Christ’s active lordship and the present work of the Holy Spirit.

This freedom must not be confused with a “merely inward, subjective sphere of our existence,” but as Calvin insisted, it should be seen as another type of freedom entirely: a freedom of conscience which enables us to be joyful and unafraid “of the wrath to come (Matt. 3:7).” Thus, Christ did not set us free for “a political freedom or a freedom of the flesh but for a theological or spiritual freedom.” In this way sin and the curse of the law are overcome. This raises the question of just what Luther meant by freedom. Did his view render “people helpless and listless in the face of a public world of vicious unfreedom” since they were undisturbed by conscience? Exploring Luther’s 1520 tract on Christian freedom, Ziegler noted that when Luther commented on Galatians, his heuristic key was Rom. 6:20, 22. He illustrated that Christian freedom was not to be understood as “quarantined within our psychic dispositions,” writing that “A Christian is a perfectly free lord of all, subject to none; a Christian is a perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all.” Jüngel has demonstrated that this Lutheran thesis does not espouse the traditional division of the “inner” and “outer” person just because, for Luther “the ‘inner man’ [is] nothing but *flesh*—in the Pauline sense” and as such is the object both of God’s judgment and grace. For Luther, the spiritual freedom of the “inner man” parallels the character of Christ’s spiritual Lordship.

This concept of spiritual freedom is meant to be understood eschatologically. Christian freedom

is a gift of the present activity of the risen Lord and the “living Spirit.” Since “it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me” (Gal. 2:20) and since “we live by the Spirit” and so “walk by the Spirit (Gal. 5:25) Christians acting as servants of one another are empowered to do so by the living Christ through the Spirit. This signifies what Christ has overcome in overcoming the world. While “no outward thing makes for Christian freedom,” still “the liberation of the ‘inner man’ from sin irrepressibly pushes forward.”

Paul does not think of Christian freedom as liberation from the world itself, but as liberation from sin “in the midst of the world.” This is captured in Paul’s statement that “the life I now live *in the flesh* I live by faith in the Son of God (Gal. 2:20).” For this reason the gift of freedom entails its task as well: “*therefore, stand firm* (Gal. 5:1b).” The power of the world is certainly not abolished, but evangelical freedom does indeed relativize this. One dares to be free “in the name of God’s kingdom” and to that extent one avoids equating “idolrous expectations of the relative freedom which can be won through human struggle,” with the freedom that comes through faith.

Luther’s view of this matter means that it is God’s freedom for us which enables us to be free for one another; the Christian is set free by Christ from the “curse of the law” in order to “possess the law, to hurl it against the neighbour’s need out of a joyful heart.” In our Christian life with others then, we do not leave behind freedom, but instead we enact it because “love is the supremely free—and so truly human—act.” One spontaneously “without interest, intention or goal” is self-giving to the other just because one is impelled by the love of God, who freely loves us, to do so.

The origin of human freedom in this sense then is to be found in God’s own freedom; this is a freedom that transcends this world but empowers Christians to act within the world so that there is a genuine relation between Christian freedom and worldly freedoms; though there is no direct identity. Jüngel understood this well since he maintained that one could be free before God

even if one was robbed of freedom in the world. As such one must joyfully “fight for worldly freedom . . . The doctrine of justification . . . is an enemy to all enemies of freedom.” These insights, Ziegler noted, were embedded in the Barmen Declaration in its statement that we are joyfully freed “from the godless ties of this world” for “grateful service” to others so that “there are no ‘areas of our life in which we would not belong to Jesus Christ.’” This provides the basis for a “genuinely evangelical social and political ethic.” Christians are impelled by this eschatological freedom to work for freedom for others in this world. We work for the liberation of others “under the sign of the cross” because “history stands under the promise of the liberating Christ.”

Evangelical freedom then is driven to love others in obedience to Christ “without reckoning” and in the power of the Spirit. This freedom “now anticipates that ‘glorious freedom of the children of God’ (Rom. 8:21) which is the final substance of all Christian hope.” Ziegler noted that Jüngel has taught us this lesson through his many years of faithful theological existence: “theology’s freedom is but the freedom of Christian *existence* realised in the responsibility of *thinking*.”

By way of conclusion, Ziegler offered ten theses on a theology of Christian freedom: 1) Christian freedom is the outworking of “Christian existence realised in the responsibility of thinking;” 2) theology serves Christian faith, life and witness by acting responsibly “for Christian freedom as a gracious creation of the Word;” 3) theology is passive in that it receives God’s Word; 4) theology “receives and acknowledges ‘God preached, revealed, offered and worshipped’” which is its subject matter; 5) both the task and act of freedom is “to offer astonished discursive acknowledgement of the gospel as ‘the power of God for salvation’ (Rom. 1:16);” 6) all self-justifying thinking is put aside for thinking that completely relies on the promise of the Word; 7) systematic theology therefore begins, continues and ends with the Word heard and believed so that proclamation is itself the necessary final move of theology; 8) theology will stress “the graciousness of grace and so the freedom of God in relation to his creatures,” the fact of our

freedom from sin and death, Christ’s present Lordship and the work of the Spirit as the enabling condition of faith and the Christian life, the eschatological reality of “the new humanity of the life of faith,” the fact that Christians live in Christ through faith and therefore not in themselves, and the fact that there are “secular consequences of Christian freedom in the time that remains;” 9) theological discourse is “chastening and edifying, polemical, prayerful and patient just because it is eschatological, that is, geared to the final redemption; 10) finally, theology reflects hope in Christ’s promise that “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free (John 8:31-32).”

A Reformed Theology of Justification

George Hunsinger
Princeton Theological Seminary

According to the new ecumenical consensus, as expressed in the *Joint Declaration on Justification*, justification by faith is a doctrine indispensable to the Gospel.¹ Agreement about what the doctrine might mean is therefore of the highest importance. Over the past 15 years a significant degree of agreement has been eked out by the Roman Catholics, the Lutherans, and the Methodists. In 1999, after many years of painstaking dialogue, the *Joint Declaration* was signed by the Catholics and the Lutherans. It was then ratified by the Methodists in 2006. What was once the flashpoint of the Reformation has settled into relative concord. The mutual anathemas of the 16th century, while still accepted as salutary warnings, have been laid aside as not applying to the present.

The Reformed Churches, however, have yet to join in this ecumenical accord. They have not yet officially endorsed the *Joint Declaration*. If they were to do so, they would be permitted to attach a

¹ *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, by the Lutheran World Federation and the Roman Catholic Church (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000).

signing statement, as the Methodists have already done. They would explain the doctrine from their distinctive vantage point. They would appreciate the great gains that have been made while still pointing to areas in need of further clarification and expression. They would affirm, enrich and challenge the existing degree of consensus.

In his lecture George Hunsinger set forth the doctrine of justification from a Reformed perspective. He not only explained its positive meaning in Reformed terms, but also attempted to dispel various distortions and misunderstandings. He noted that some of these have arisen among those outside the Reformed tradition, but others have crept into the tradition itself.

Forensic Justification

One significant misunderstanding clusters around the very idea of “forensic justification.” “Justification” is, of course, by definition a forensic term. As used in the New Testament, and especially by Paul, it suggests a courtroom drama in three parts in which a “divine lawsuit” has been brought against the sinner.

- In the first part a doomed prisoner (the sinner) stands accused and condemned before the holy throne of God (*in foro Dei*). The prisoner seems entirely without hope.
- The drama comes to a spectacular conclusion in the third part, however, with the prisoner being acquitted and set free. Despite the prisoner’s desperate and even infinite guilt before the Lord God, the condemnation is not carried out but averted. Indeed it is more than averted, for the prisoner ends up being elevated and adopted as God’s child into eternal life.
- Doctrinal confusion arises, however, about what actually happens in part two, the part on which the whole drama turns. What makes it possible for the utter

hopelessness portrayed in part one to be reversed so dramatically in part three?

Hunsinger noted that according to one account, part two is still entirely (or at least mostly) forensic. The prisoner is acquitted, because the Divine Judge exercises a surprising prerogative in pronouncing the prisoner “not guilty.” It turns out that the prisoner has faith in Christ. The punishment deserved by the prisoner—eternal death in the form of separation from God—was already carried out on the cross. It was borne by Christ out of love so that the sinner might in turn be spared.

Although the prisoner is completely guilty and unrighteous before God, Christ himself is completely innocent and righteous. The Divine Judge decides to regard the punishment borne by Christ—the Judge and Christ both love the prisoner—as sufficient for granting an acquittal. In fact, when the Judge pronounces the prisoner to be innocent or “not guilty,” the prisoner is actually made to be “righteous” before God “on account of” the righteousness of Christ. Christ’s righteousness is communicated to the prisoner by grace through faith.

The righteousness of Christ is thus said to be “imputed” to the prisoner or sinner, and the imputation takes place precisely by way of the divine judicial pronouncement. Just as there is light when the Lord God says, “Let there be light,” so the sinner is made to be righteous (by the righteousness of Christ) when the Divine Judge declares the sinner to be not guilty. “Imputation” is thus thought to occur by virtue of the judicial declaration.² The sinner’s faith is counted as “righteousness,” and the sinner is justified or acquitted “for the sake of Christ” (*propter Christum*), in whom the sinner trusts with his whole being. The dramatic reversal in part three depends on the imputation of righteousness in part two.

² A recent example of this view can be found in Jüngel: “They [those who are justified] are righteous purely and simply because they are pronounced righteous.” See Eberhard Jüngel, *Justification, The Heart of the Christian Faith* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2001), p. 206 (emphasis original).

Hunsinger noted that there are several problems with this account, but two in particular stand out. First, within the logic of the forensic metaphor, it is impossible to see how the guilt of the sinner can be transferred to another who is innocent. From a legal point of view, justice would seem to be violated if an innocent person is punished in the place of someone else who is actually guilty. Second, and from a theological point of view perhaps more seriously, it not easy to see how the sinner can be turned into his opposite and become righteous simply by virtue of the divine declaration. In one standard “forensic” account, not only is the accused treated as innocent without really being innocent, but the accused still remains inherently a sinner even after having been declared righteous.³

It is understandable that against this version of the forensic account, two standard objections have arisen. First, the righteousness of the sinner has been rejected for being a “legal fiction,” since this righteousness seems merely nominal. Second, “forensic justification” has been dismissed as mere “extrinsicism,” because the sinner’s righteousness, though declared, does not seem to make the sinner cease to be a sinner from within. The guilty party has not only been declared righteous without really being righteous, but still also remains a sinner in himself.

In Hunsinger’s view, these problems arguably arise because the forensic metaphor is being made to do too much work. Other biblical concepts and metaphors—especially those that are cultic, mystical and apocalyptic—have been marginalized. Only a richer, more complex account can do justice to the drama of justification. Part two of the drama requires more conceptual tools than the forensic toolbox has to offer.

Imputation Presupposes Union with Christ

Another account of “forensic justification” has prevailed in the Reformed tradition. Although the previous version is sometimes regarded as

³ Jüngel deals with these problems in his own way in *Justification*, pp. 208-11.

Reformed, it has historically been more characteristic of the Lutherans. According to Matthias Schneckenburger, a 19th century historian of doctrine, a significant difference about the doctrine of justification arose between the Lutherans and the Reformed in the 17th and 18th centuries. He writes: “Unlike the Lutherans, who saw *unio mystica* as the effect and consequence of justification, the Reformed saw union with Christ as justification’s prior condition.”⁴ In other words, a difference existed about the *ordo salutis*.

For the Lutherans, one had first to be made righteous before one could enter into union with Christ. One was made righteous by imputation. The imputation (or transferral) of Christ’s righteousness to faith took place “forensically.” It took place, that is, by virtue of God’s judicial declaration of acquittal. One became righteous as one was “declared” righteous, and on that basis one entered into union with Christ by faith.⁵

For the Reformed, “union with Christ” was the context in which the believer became righteous before God. This union was presupposed by the doctrine of justification, because the imputation of Christ’s righteousness did not take place without it. For Calvin the chief work of the Holy Spirit was faith (*Inst.* III.1.4), and the chief effect of faith was to bring believers into union with Christ (III.1.3). Union with Christ was the source of all Christ’s saving benefits (III.1.1). This union was far more spiritual or mystical in status than it was legal or forensic.

For the Reformed (e.g., Calvin, Owen, Turretin, Torrance), we are not righteous because we are *declared* righteous. We are declared righteous because in Christ we *are* righteous. Our righteousness before God is most emphatically not a “legal fiction,” nor is it something merely “extrinsic.” It arises “mystically,” so to speak, for faith through our union with Christ in the Spirit.⁶

⁴ See Matthias Schneckenburger, *Vergleichende Darstellung des lutherischen und reformierten Lehrbegriffs* (Stuttgart: J.B. Metzler’schen, 1855), p. 195.

⁵ Note that this was seen as a logical not a temporal progression.

⁶ “It is particularly significant,” writes Thomas F. Torrance, “that Calvin’s doctrine of justification through union with Christ and participation in his obedient

For the Reformed, mystical union with Christ constitutes, in effect, “part two” in the drama of justification, because it is there that the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to faith is understood to occur. Union with Christ introduces a decidedly non-forensic element into the story-line, in between “part one” (condemnation) and “part three” (acquittal). The Reformed narrative is thus one of condemnation, union with Christ, and acquittal.

The phrase *unio mystica*, which is found only twice in Calvin’s *Institutes*, makes one of its appearances in his discussion of justification (*Inst.* III.11.10). At this point Calvin may be alluding to a striking passage from Luther. In his great 1520 treatise “The Freedom of a Christian,” Luther uses the traditional mystical imagery of the bridegroom and the bride. He writes:

The third incomparable benefit of faith is that it unites the soul with Christ as a bride is united with her bridegroom . . . Christ is full of grace, life, and salvation. The soul is full of sins, death, and damnation. Now let faith come between them and sin, death, and damnation will be Christ’s, while grace, life and salvation will be the soul’s. For if Christ is the bridegroom, he must take upon himself the things which belong to his bride and bestow upon her the things that are his. If he gives her his body and very self, how shall he not give her all that is his? And if he takes the body of the bride, how shall he not take all that is hers? (LW 31:351)

This act of taking away the negative and bestowing the positive is what Reformers meant by “imputation.” In the mystical union of the bridegroom and the bride, as described by Luther, Christ takes all the sins, death and damnation of the believing soul to himself. He bears its plight

Sonship was deeply indebted to Cyril of Alexandria in contrast to Luther’s conception of justification which was heavily influenced by Augustine.” See Torrance, “Karl Barth and Patristic Theology,” in *Karl Barth: Biblical and Evangelical Theologian* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1990), p. 188.

of sin and death in order to bear it away. At the same time, he also gives himself to the believing soul, as a bridegroom gives himself to his bride. In his self-giving, the bridegroom bestows grace, life, and salvation upon the believing soul, or more precisely, on the community of all faithful people. In short, sin is imputed to Christ even as his righteousness is imputed to us. Imputation involves a real transfer of predicates in two different directions. It is a movement from sinners to Christ and from Christ to sinners. Our plight of sin and death is transferred to him, even as his attributes of righteousness and life are transferred to us, that is, to those joined with him through faith. This is the great and saving exchange (*admirabile commercium*), or what Luther called the “joyous exchange.” On the cross Christ has taken our sin and death to himself, and in rising again from the dead he gives us his righteousness and life.

While this exchange is clearly mysterious, there is nothing fictional or extrinsic about it. It is no less real than the cross of Good Friday and the empty tomb of Easter day. Nor is it something less than integral to both parties concerned, for it is no less integral than the wounds that disfigured Christ’s body and the new unending life that he gloriously bestows on those raised with him from the dead.

Jüngel on the Theological Metaphor

Paul R. Hinlicky, Roanoke College, Salem VA

Paul R. Hinlicky began his lecture noting that Eberhard Jüngel rightly affirmed that “the cross of Jesus Christ is the ground and measure of the formation of metaphors which are appropriate to God.”⁷ Christ crucified, then, is the key theological metaphor. Where this admittedly *odd* standard of orthodoxy is in force, which aims to reiterate Paul’s call at the outset of the first letter to the Corinthians to know nothing but Christ and

⁷ Eberhard Jüngel, *Theological Essays I* ed. J. B. Webster (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989), p. 65.

him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2), it hastens on through all the difficulties of the *ecclesia* living as new creation in the still unredeemed world to tell properly of the resurrection of the body, the redemption of the creation, and the renewal of the world envisioned as our promised future, when God will become all things to everyone (1 Corinthians 15:28). Thus Hinlicky maintained that Jüngel argues that the key theological metaphor, Christ crucified, when rightly deciphered, brings about a “gain to being” that “expands the horizon of the world in such a way that we may speak of the renewal of the world.”⁸

Jüngel thus attempts to order the paradox of the Messiah’s cross to the similitude of new creation that it realizes. This ordering is motivated by Jüngel’s entirely proper desire to secure a redemptive relationship of the interruptive Word of the cross to the world in which we live, so that the world, fallen into godlessness, is contradicted redemptively and thus made anew to be seen as the blessed creature of God on the way to righteousness, life and peace. The apparent contradiction of this world by the paradox of the cross of the Messiah brings in its wake the new affirmation of the world, vindicating the simile of creation: as the potter to the clay, so the One who vindicated the crucified Jesus is to the world that crucified him: “Behold, I make all things new!” If that is right, this attempted ordering renders creation itself an eschatological notion, a work in progress advancing from the promise of the origin to the consummation of the Beloved Community; or, alternatively, if this attempted ordering fails, redemption can be nothing more than the disclosure of a creation that already is given, possessing the goodness in which it is divinely regarded, although somehow lost from conscious awareness.

Jüngel, however, senses a potentially crippling difficulty with the paradox of Messiah’s cross, if it is in fact to be ordered to the similitude of new creation. He therefore qualified his formulation of the strange contradiction in terms of Christ crucified, with the *ubi et quando Deo visum est* of the Augsburg Confession V: “A theological metaphor can only have this [redemptive] effect,

however, because of the renewing power of the Spirit of God.”⁹ It is in the hands of the Spirit that the paradox of contradiction, Christ crucified, effects a salutary, not a desperate slaying of the old Adam and brings forth the similitude of the new born child of God. The Spirit working through the Word, that is to say, effects not only a *translatio* in words that discloses being as creation, but effects a valid verbal predication of new birth in creatures. In other words, the Spirit’s proclamation of the paradox works causally not merely disclosively. It discloses because it enunciates first of all a *translatio* of things.

So Luther had argued against Laotomus, upon which argument Jüngel here is drawing: “*Et in hac translatione non solum est verborum, sed et rerum metaphora. Nam vere peccata nostra a nobis translata sunt a posita super ipsum, ut omnis qui hoc credit, vere nulla peccata habeat, sed translata super Christum, absorpta in ipso, eum amplius non damnent.*” (“And in this transference [that Christ was made to be sin, 2 Corinthians 5: 21] it is **not only a metaphor of words but of things**. For truly our sins are transferred from us and placed on him, so that all who believe him truly have no sins but they are transferred onto him, absorbed in him, no longer damning him.”)¹⁰

For Luther, the exchange of *things* concerns *first of all* Christ, and only so *also* the believer. It is Christ who came once for all and thus and as such still comes by the Word and the Spirit as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Only so, can this Word incarnate say and regard the auditor as forgiven and freed as a matter of truth, no matter how she feels, or actually is, one

⁹ Jüngel, p. 71.

¹⁰ *D. Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (Weimar: Bohlau, 1883-8), p. 87; cf. LW 32, p. 200. See here the compelling analysis of Anna Vind, “Christus factus est peccatum metaphorice: Über die theologische Verwendung rhetorischer Figuren bei Luther unter Einbeziehung Quintilians,” in Oswald Bayer & Benjamin Gleede, eds. *Creator est creatura: Luthers Christologie als Lehre von der Idiomenkommunikation* (Berlin & NY: Walter De Gruyter, 2007) pp. 95-124. In his 1974 essay, Jüngel drew on the Luther texts Vind analyzes. In the same volume, see also my treatment of Luther on metaphor, “Luther’s Anti-Docetism in the *Disputatio de divinitate et humanitate Christi* (1540)” pp. 147-66.

⁸ Jüngel, p. 71.

way or another. Luther's *metaphora rerum* concerns Christ who comes to the sinner and consequently also the sinner who is brought to Christ by the Spirit. If that christological priority is clear, the next question is whether the power to become the child of God can have "this effect" in the believer merely by saying so, "abracadabra," (*ex opere operato*, say, by a *performance* of language), that is, apart from the corresponding "translating" power, if I may so put it, of the freely blowing Spirit of God working a corresponding death and resurrection in the auditor.¹¹

The faith to receive the crucified Messiah who bore our sins in order to make us right, then, is itself gift, the gift of new birth into the likeness of God as newborn children of the heavenly Father. To be sure, this effect is worked by none other than the Spirit of Jesus Christ, whom the Son breathes upon the auditor just as the Father had breathed upon him, that is, the Spirit who now sovereignly sheds the costly love of God abroad in human hearts that have been convicted concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11). Consequently, in the Spirit-given reality of repentant faith, sin is yielded to Christ who bears it away and in turn his righteousness truly becomes the believer's own, just as if she had done it herself rather than receiving it from Another as Another's self-donating gift.

Such is the nature of gift, that, doubly unmerited, it nevertheless truly becomes one's own, one's own *possession* in the ecstatic sense of "having, as having not..." (cf. 1 Corinthians 7:29-31). Just this new and personal appropriation of Christ's righteousness—the life's obedience that brought him anointed in the Spirit to the cross for the sake of others—as one's own is the Spirit-given *translatio rerum* of the human subject; it is the faith that justifies.¹² Faith in its own *specific way*

of being as death to sin and resurrection to newness of life by the Spirit-given appropriation of the Christ who repossesses sin in offering himself in love thus corresponds to the *specific way of being* that is told by the metaphor, Christ crucified, namely, that new thing-and-meaning in the world that is the Son who came not to be served but to serve and lay down his life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45). This correspondence of possessing faith to the giving God is, or could be taken as akin to Karl Barth's *analogy of faith* (CD I/1: 236-45).

Clearly the divine Word, returning from his source in Luther to Jüngel himself, works as *catachrestic* metaphor.¹³ The catachrestic metaphor asserts an apparent contradiction in order to deliver a new meaning in the world, for which there is no available term in the lexicon; hence Luther's claim that the metaphor *of words*, Christ crucified, *refers* to the unprecedented metaphor *of things*, the Christ who as suffering Servant of the Lord (Isaiah 53) bore away the sin of the world. In this way, for Jüngel, the catachrestic metaphor in the Spirit's hand works *in the ordered sequence* that passes from paradox to simile, from contradiction to similitude, from the death of the sinner to the new-born child of God. The motion reflects Luther's crucial *purpose clause*, "God kills *in order to make alive*" as God surpasses God in God's motion from the wrath of his love to the mercy of his love.

Another way to pose the question about how Jüngel thinks this movement to occur, then, is to ask, "Can the metaphor fail in this progression, e.g., can it blind and harden (Mark 4:11-12) as well as enlighten and redeem?" Arguably, it *can* fail in the sequence Jüngel, following Luther, intends, precisely if and when the disruptive metaphor of paradox is thought to work "on its own," so to speak, as if it were routine similitude, even if also a rhetorically intensive performative utterance. But this melodramatic return to the equivocation of routine simile takes the paradox of contradiction out of the Spirit's hands and puts it back into the keeping of the religion business as usual. There it is thought to work routinely on its

¹¹ The question of a pneumatological deficit in Jüngel has been raised by R. David Nelson in his *The Interruptive Word: Eberhard Jüngel on the Sacramental Structure of God's Relation to the World* (London and New York: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2013), p. 129.

¹² I have dedicated the first part of my dogmatics to this theme of theological subjectivity; see Paul R. Hinlicky, *Beloved Community: Critical Dogmatics after Christendom* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015), pp. 193-293.

¹³ Janet Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (Oxford, U.K.: Clarendon, 1987), pp. 58-63.

own, doing business as usual in religion, when the dissonance of paradox is muted by annulling univocity in principle. If we approach, “Christ crucified,” as a normal simile, however, we defang the catachrestic metaphor of the striking contradiction (perceptible if, and only if, terms are used univocally, e.g., where Christ means victor like Joshua or David but Crucified means victim). And if we defang the paradox, we miss the new meaning and reality in the world that it generates. The paradox, Christ crucified, i.e., the Victor who became victim in order to become victorious for others, thus tells theologically of a horizontal passage from wrath to mercy; but turned into simile, it supposedly discloses how the world really is, anchored in Being Itself where grace is everything by analogy and therefore nothing real in particular. The horizontal passage that moves from Good Friday to Easter Morn is transposed into the vertical simultaneity of the Great Chain of Being.

Just so, the intended progression *through contradiction* to similitude is obscured. In this case, if not taken *in the Spirit by faith* as the contradiction in terms, “Christ crucified,” this kerygma has to be taken *out of the Spirit, in bad faith*, disclosing something like, “To be Christ is to be victim,” or “The victims of the world are Christ.” Not a little contemporary theology, right and left, views the matter in just this way, forgetting that a mere disclosure of timeless truth—even the truth that God is love or that the loving God sympathizes with the victims or that the love of God is (merely) revealed on the cross—can be, in Paul’s or Luther’s sense, nothing but law: a divine truth that crushes me in my impotent lovelessness and leaves there, dead in my sins, be it as victim or as victimizer.

It is important to see why we may come to such perverse theology that divinizes victimization or victimizes the divine—and justly offends alike those who struggle against victimization and those who hope in God’s vindication of victims. We mute the paradox in this way, making it into an illuminating disclosure of some supposedly deeper truth of our world, because we take ourselves, the human auditors of this strange announcement, as having by nature rather than by personal transformation of repentance and faith

epistemic access and corresponding aptitude to process this information in comparison to, and thus as part of, all that we already know. We have access and acquire aptitude as members of a system of beings ordered as cosmos who regularly learn the lesser known in terms of what is already familiar. We presume to learn accordingly what it is to be Christ crucified by our all too familiar experience of victimization. “Christ crucified”—for good or ill, victimization is the deepest truth of our world. Self-hatred, as the history of popular Christianity amply documents, becomes the religious work that brings us close to the divine, while for elite culture “pleasure is in the perception of a momentary radiance, before the door of disappointment is finally shut on us.”¹⁴

The alternative to this perverse but ever popular theology—and the reason why the mature Luther left behind the easily misunderstood rhetoric of his early “theology of the cross”¹⁵ to learn to speak the Crucified in the Spirit as truly his Father’s victory for us, be we victimizers or victims—is that the metaphorical Word works as the Spirit intends in progressing *through contradiction* to similitude. If that is so, it is the *humanity* of Jesus Christ, univocally taken as something to which we can point in the world *sub Pontio Pilato*, which *is* the “vestige” of the God who is tri-personal love on the way to us all.¹⁶ We may speak this way because Christ Jesus *is* this way of the Kingdom’s advent. He *is*, that is to say, he does *not* signify *as to Another* than himself, but he *is* the Son of God in the flesh, the *translatio rerum* on the basis of which we speak the gospel as a *translatio verborum*, whenever we speak the gospel concretely to anyone, as *pro nobis*.

¹⁴ Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 145.

¹⁵ See further, Paul R. Hinlicky, *Luther and the Beloved Community: A Path for Christian Theology after Christendom* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), pp. 358-63.

¹⁶ Eberhard Jüngel, *God as the Mystery of the World: On the Foundation of the Theology of the Crucified One in the Dispute between Theism and Atheism* trans. D. L. Guder (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1983), pp. 343-68.

Readers of the Newsletter are directed to the important book, *Indicative of Grace—Imperative of Freedom: Essays in Honour of Eberhard Jüngel in His 80th Year*, ed. R. David Nelson, (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2014) for the full essays of Professors Ziegler, Hunsinger and Hinlicky. There are many other essays in this book that would surely be of interest to members of the Karl Barth Society as well.

Book Review

Saving Karl Barth: Hans Urs von Balthasar's Preoccupation. By D. Stephen Long. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014, pp. vii-304. \$49.00 (paper). ISBN 978-1-4514-7014-7.

I think this is really an exciting piece of work. Being very well-researched and groundbreaking in its use of materials from the von Balthasar archive, it brings a fresh perspective to our understanding of Karl Barth and of his relationship with his close Catholic friend. I learned a lot I didn't know from reading it. I am happy to recommend this book highly, though I have reservations about a few of its lesser arguments.

First, a small but not unimportant point about how to translate a particular phrase. Long regularly comes back to a remark made by Barth in the first volume of his *Church Dogmatics*. Barth is trying to get a handle on what it is that finally separates the Roman Catholic church from the churches of the Reformation. When God's Word is proclaimed, he asks, is Christ's action tied to the ecclesiastical office of the minister, or is it not actually the other way around, namely, that the office is tied to Christ's action whenever the Word is "actualized," or "made effectual," through preaching? The first would be the Catholic view, while the second would be the Reformation's.

Barth wants to insist with the Reformation that the saving efficacy of the church's ministry resides in Christ alone, who bears witness to himself through the preaching of the church. The saving efficacy of preaching is not divided between Christ and the minister, along the lines, say, of primary and secondary causality. Causality thinking, Barth contends, is out of place when it comes to understanding the mystery of divine and human action. For Barth, there is only one Saving Agent, and his name is Jesus Christ. When others act in and through Christ as his instruments and witnesses, they acquire no secondary saving agency of their own. No matter if there is more than one acting subject, there is always only one Saving Agent. The issue can then be rephrased: Is there only one Saving Agent at work in the ministry of the church, or are there many lesser ones alongside the One who is supreme? Barth observes: "From the standpoint of our theses this question is the puzzling cleft which has cut right across the church during the last 400 years" (I/1, 99).

Long regularly re-translates the German in Barth's observation—*der rätselhafte Riß*—as "the enigmatic cleft." The author resorts to other variants as well, but this is the one he prefers. However, the phrase might better be rendered as "the perplexing rift" or "the vexing split." The noun *der Riß* has connotations of "rupture" more nearly than of "cleft." Barth is pointing to a conception of human action in relation to God's grace that has torn the fabric of the church for more than 400 years. While the translation problem is minor, the issue to which it points is not. I will return to it in due course.

At the heart of Long's book is a contrast between a form of "neoscholastic retrenchment" in Roman Catholic theology as over against a "modernizing" or "post-metaphysical" movement in Protestant circles that would claim Barth as their supposed forebear. The neoscholastics are critical of Balthasar for being too influenced by Barth while the post-

metaphysical claimants seem to confirm their deepest fears about where Barth goes wrong. Although Long overstates the influence of these two groupings—I don't think their combined forces have led to the "collapse" of Balthasar's interpretation of Barth—they have at least put a dent in it. Long is right to worry that they are having a baleful influence on a younger generation of scholars, and more importantly that they create unfortunate and finally specious obstacles to the future of ecumenical rapprochement.

I want to concentrate on Long's critique of those Protestants who would argue that Barth is a "postmetaphysical" theologian, at least by implication, because he is alleged to be "thoroughly modern." I agree with Long that, among other things, this line of interpretation overstates the degree to which Barth was influenced by Kant. Barth's theology arguably includes "modern," "post-modern," and even "pre-modern" elements all at once. It would be better to characterize his theology as "thoroughly eclectic." Only by being happily eclectic could Barth proceed with his project of trying to take every thought captive in obedience to Christ without becoming a captive to modernity himself.

Long singles out six features in the new "post-metaphysical" Barth interpretation, which if adopted would "radically revise the Christian doctrine of God" (*Saving Karl Barth*, p. 148).

- First, if an attempt is made (as it is) to identify the Son's obedience to the Father in the economy with his generation by the Father in eternity, wouldn't that make creation intrinsic to God's being?
- Second, is there really (as claimed) no prior and permanent role for the *Logos asarkos* in the eternal being of the triune God? If enfleshment belongs eternally to the Son's essence, how would the Son be free to become incarnate? "Has

not flesh conditioned God's triunity?" (p. 148).

- Third, if the divine missions in the economy are necessary to the Trinity's eternal processions, wouldn't this mean that God cannot be God without creation? Indeed, wouldn't it mean that the distinction between the economic and the immanent Trinity is collapsed?
- Fourth, if God becomes the Holy Trinity through his pre-temporal act of election, wouldn't that again mean that God cannot be God without creation?
- Fifth, doesn't this view make God to be fundamentally dependent on creation? Wouldn't this mean that God and the world mutually condition one another?
- Finally, doesn't this view entail that divine predications like simplicity and impassibility must be jettisoned? Wouldn't it introduce an element of potentiality into God's being so that God would no longer be *actus purus*?

In short, "if the processions and missions must be held together as an eternal act, then not only the Son's humanity but all of creation would need to be eternal" (p. 149). As Long rightly observes, the later Barth repeatedly blocks such moves as we find in this line of Barth interpretation. Long rightly quotes Barth: "In the inner life of God, as the eternal essence of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the divine essence does not of course, need any actualization" (IV/2, 113). This is far from an isolated remark. For the Barth of *Church Dogmatics*, from beginning to end, God does not need the world in order to be God, nor is there any element of contingency in God's being.

Long is also correct when he appeals to Thomas Aquinas for whom the "missions" are not eternal, because Aquinas posited that it was

possible for God to do something temporally that did not require God to actualize a potential. This is Barth's view as well. For Barth, as for Aquinas, "creation does not add something to, or take away from, God" (p. 149), i.e., to God's eternal essence.

Like Aquinas, Barth always affirmed that God's triune being was pure act, that it was perfect and sufficient in itself, and that it did not exclude a distinction between God's "absolute being" and his "contingent will" (III/1, 15). Barth openly aligned himself with the medieval Dominican in this regard. He noted that Aquinas upheld "the most important statement in the doctrine of creation—namely, that of the *novitas mundi* [contingency of the world]" (III/1, 4 rev.). Barth also endorsed Aquinas's teaching "that the world is not eternal but has a beginning." He agreed with him that the idea of creation's contingency "is only *credibile, non autem scibile et demonstrabile* [a matter of belief, not of immediate knowledge or rational demonstration] (*S. theol.*, I, *qu.* 46, *art.* 2c)" (III/1, 4). On all such matters the actually existing textual Barth is far closer to Aquinas than to Hegel and the Barth revisionists.

The revisionist line of Barth interpretation that Long challenges can only maintain itself by ignoring a great deal of contrary textual evidence. It attempts to do so mainly by claiming that the later Barth is "inconsistent." On those grounds, it proceeds as if all contrary textual evidence in the *Church Dogmatics* can simply be brushed aside. These are complicated questions which cannot be pursued here. I deal with them extensively, however, in my recently published book *Reading Barth with Charity: A Hermeneutical Proposal* (Baker Academic, 2015). For the time being I would simply like to align myself with the line of questioning that Stephen Long so trenchantly sets forth.

In conclusion, I want to turn to a matter touched on at the outset. Professor Long admirably wants to look for ways in which the historic divisions between Roman Catholic

theology and Protestant theology can be overcome. One of the neuralgic points to which he returns throughout his book is the question of whether the church can properly be described as a "prolongation of the incarnation." This is one of the deepest differences that Long identifies as separating Balthasar and Barth (pp. 285-86). For Balthasar if the church is not the prolongation of the incarnation, there is no historical drama of God's actions through the church (no "theodrama") (p. 230). For Barth, who rejected this idea as "blasphemy" (IV/3, 729), it illicitly elevates the church to the point where it not only acts alongside Christ, but in practice even above him "as his vicar in earthly history" (IV/3, 36). The only proper view for Barth was one where the church was always completely subordinate to Christ, never alongside or above him. The church was always in the position of an absolute dependence on grace, which for Barth meant the position of prayer.

The intractability of this issue is only intensified when it is recognized, as Long notes, that in *Lumen Gentium* the church is still referred to as the extension of the incarnation (p. 216 n.123). Long can't understand why Barth refuses to follow Balthasar on this question. He implies that he himself agrees with Balthasar in holding that Barth fails to have "an adequate account of human agency" (p. 230).

It is, however, tendentious to accuse Barth's view of being "inadequate" without probing into the deeper issues. What counts as "adequate" is precisely what is contested between Catholicism and the Reformation. Balthasar strives heroically to construct a view of the *incarnatus prolongatus* that would escape from many of the Reformation's objections (p. 219). He cannot escape, however, from upholding the idea that human actors can play some auxiliary causal or contributory role, apart from and alongside Christ, in carrying out the work of salvation. This observation pertains especially to Balthasar's view of Mary and the ordained

ministry of the church (presbyters, bishops, and the pope).

Balthasar cannot strictly uphold the Reformation's fundamental conviction that human salvation occurs *sola fide*, *sola gratia* and *solus Christus*. There is a yawning chasm between the idea of "Christ alone" and that of "Christ primarily." For Barth and the Reformation, the faithful actions of human beings give them the status of being "witnesses," and even "mediators," but without ever making them into secondary "Saving Agents," which could only mean their usurping of the incommunicable office and inviolable dignity of the Lord Jesus Christ. For Barth and the Reformation, everything believers may do is at its best an act of gratitude, never one with any claim to "merit" before God. Barth's view might not convince Balthasar and his contemporary adherents, but it should not be perplexing as to why he holds it. For him, the church is always a witness to the incarnation, never in any sense an extension of it.

Divine and human action are, as I argue in *How to Read Karl Barth* (Oxford, 1991), always related for Barth by means of the Chalcedonian Pattern. They are related "without separation or division" (inseparable unity), "without confusion or change" (abiding distinction), and with an "asymmetrical ordering principle" (the absolute primacy and precedence belong always to God). Within this fundamental structure divine and human agency are non-competitive. For Barth, in line with the Reformation, Catholic views of divine and human agency regularly violate the stricture against confusion or change, and especially against compromising the principle of asymmetry.

George Hunsinger
McCord Professor of Theology
Princeton Theological Seminary

Food for Thought

In explaining his rejection of the *line* of thought in Christology that he categorized as ebionite and docetic Barth said: "The New Testament thinks in terms of an assertion that constantly appeals back to revelation. Its axiom: no *Weltanschauung*—only resurrection of the dead! This is the beginning for Christians. Afterwards comes logic, when we begin to witness. But all is suspended from revelation. There are only two kinds of theology: one that begins with revelation, a lot of others that begin elsewhere. The whole doctrine of the Trinity is simply an attempt to explain this beginning" (*Karl Barth's Table Talk*, recorded and ed. John Godsey [Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1962], p. 53).

ANNUAL BARTH SOCIETY DUES

NOTE: NEW DUES PAYMENT OPTION

Everyone interested in joining the Karl Barth Society of North America is invited to become a member by renewing or purchasing their membership at: <http://kbsna.kbarth.org/>

Alternatively, you may send your name, address (including email address) and annual dues of \$25.00 (\$15.00 for students) to:

Professor Paul D. Molnar
Editor, KBSNA Newsletter
Department of Theology
and Religious Studies
St. John Hall
St. John's University
8000 Utopia Parkway
Queens, New York 11439
Email: molnarp@stjohns.edu

Checks **drawn on a U.S. bank** should be made payable to the **Karl Barth Society of North America**

Your annual dues enable the KBSNA to help underwrite the annual Karl Barth Conference and to attract key-note speakers for that conference and for our fall meeting. The KBSNA thanks all who have paid their dues for this year.